

Message Text

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61

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 OPIC-12

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R 161500Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5635

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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VIENNA FOR EWTC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, ETRD, CZ

SUBJ: OFFICE FACILITIES FOR WESTERN FIRMS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

REF: PRAGUE A-129, SEP 26, 1973

1. ON JANUARY 16 CROSSAN, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF DOW CHEMICAL IN VIENNA AND RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPANY'S ACTIVITIES IN EASTERN EUROPE, CALLED ON KELLER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ADVANCED CAPITALIST COUNTRIES AT MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE. EMBASSY OFFICE ACCOMPANIED AT CROSSAN'S REQUEST. CROSSAN, NOTING DOW'S GROWING SALES IN EASTERN EUROPE, AMOUNTING TO 12 MILLION DOLLARS NOW ANNUALLY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, MADE PITCH FOR PERMISSION TO OPEN PERMANENT OFFICE IN PRAGUE. CROSSAN NOTED THAT POLES HAD RECENTLY GIVEN DOW PERMISSION TO OPEN IN WARSAW, EVEN WITHOUT PASSING NEW LEGISLATION; HE STRESSED THAT DOW WAS SATISFIED WITH REPHACHEM REPRESENTATION AGENCY WHICH PRESENTLY REPRESENTS IT HERE, BUT THAT THERE WERE OBVIOUS ADVANTAGES TO DOW HAVING ITS OWN OFFICE.

2. KELLER STRESSED THAT DOW WAS LOOKED ON FAVORABLY HERE BUT THAT CZECHS FELT COMPELLED TO GIVE EQUAL TREATMENT TO ALL WESTERN FIRMS UNDER MFN PRINCIPLE. THERE HAD BEEN SOME PRESSURE FOR CZECHOSLOVAKIA TO FOLLOW EXAMPLE OF OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES IN
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PERMITTING WESTERN FIRMS TO HAVE OFFICES, AND SINCE FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER BARCAK HAD INDICATED DURING VISIT TO TOKYO THAT QUESTION

WAS BEING RECONSIDERED, THERE HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY HEAVY PRESSURE FROM JAPANESE. CZECHS HAD RESTUDIED MATTER, BUT KELLER THOUGHT THAT THERE WAS LITTLE CHANCE FOREIGN FIRMS WOULD BE ABLE TO OPEN OWN OFFICES IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

3. WE NOTED TO CROSSAN LATER THAT WE HAD PREVIOUSLY MADE PITCH TO MIHISTRY ON SAME GERNAL SUBJECT (REFAIR); WE WILL DO SO AGAIN IF AND WHEN IT LOOKS LIKE IT MIGHT BE PRODUCTIVE.

4. WHILE WE SEE NO REASON NOT TO PASS ON INTERESTED AMERICAN FIRMS GIST OF KELLER'S STATEMENTS, RECOMMEND THAT SOURCE, AND FACT THAT PITCH WAS MADE BY DOW, BE PROTECTED.
WORTZEL

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